

Fort Sam Houston National Historic Landmark
Latrine (Building #151, Cavalry Post)
San Antonio
Bexar County
Texas

HABS No. TX-3303-15

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PHOTOGRAPHS

HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA

Historic American Buildings Survey
National Architectural and Engineering Record
National Park Service
Department of the Interior
Washington, D.C. 20240

HISTORIC AMERICAN BUILDINGS SURVEY
FORT SAM HOUSTON NATIONAL HISTORIC LANDMARK

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LATRINE
(Building #151, Cavalry Post)

HABS No. TX-3303-15

Location: On the south side of Stanley Road directly behind Barracks #143, San Antonio, Bexar County, Texas.

Present Owner and Occupant: United States Army

Present Use: Reserve Unit Offices

Significance: The latrine is part of a complex of buildings including two barracks buildings, another latrine and a kitchen and mess hall, all of similar materials and design. The complex, one of four identical groupings adjacent to each other, represents the turn-of-the-century development of the artillery and cavalry posts at Fort Sam Houston. All structures are built from standardized plans from the Office of the Quartermaster General of the U.S. Army and provide a good example of military post design during this period.

PART I. HISTORICAL INFORMATION

A. Physical History:

1. Date of Erection: 1908
2. Architect: Office of the Quartermaster General, U.S. Army; plan #134-K.
3. Original and Subsequent Owners: U.S. Army from date of construction to the present.
4. Contractor: Not known.
5. Original Plans and Construction: This one-story brick structure is basically rectangular in plan with a recessed, central, entryway. Storerooms on either side of the entryway are only accessible from the exterior. The interior was basically open with sinks, toilets and urinals and a central block with showers and a heating system.
6. Alterations and Additions: The exterior has remained unchanged while the interior has been modified for office use. This change, according to early real estate records, occurred c. 1946 with the "conversion of the building to a day room - architectural and mechanical plans".

PART II. ARCHITECTURAL INFORMATION:

A. General Statement:

1. Architectural Character: The latrine is basically a utilitarian structure built in 1908 from standardized plans of the Office of the Quartermaster General of the U.S. Army. Design elements, including segmental arched openings with double-rowlock lintels and dressed limestone sills, entrance columns and multi-pane transoms, display a concern for its aesthetic contribution as well, despite its function.
2. Condition of Fabric: The fabric is in good condition.

B. Description of Exterior:

1. Over-all Dimensions: This building measures 5 bays by 3 bays with one story and a rectangular plan with recessed entry porch.
2. Foundations: The foundations are made of rock and concrete with projecting rough coursed limestone foundations above grade.
3. Wall Construction, Finish and Color: The walls are made of smooth red brick in common bond (5-1-5, stretcher-to-header pattern).
4. Structural System, Framing: The structural system consists of brick load-bearing walls.
5. Porches, Stoops, Balconies and Bulkheads: There is a recessed entrance with Tuscan columns in-antis.
6. Chimneys: A center corbelled chimney rises up from behind the ridge line on the south side.
7. Openings:
 - a. Doorways and Doors: There is a double door entry with a five-pane arched transom and an arched triple rowlock above. The doors are five-panel, horizontal raised-panel doors.

There are side doors off the recessed porch also with transom light (3-pane), plain flat door, double rowlock detailing above.

Rear double doors, off-center, with five-pane, squared transom and five-panel, horizontal panel doors. There is a arched triple rowlock above.

- b. Windows: The windows are six-over-six sash with double-rowlock above and limestone sills below.

8. Roof:

- a. Shape, Covering: The roof is hipped with slightly gabled peak and a French clay tile surface.
- b. Cornice, Eaves: The eaves have a wide overhang with extended curved rafter end supports.

C. Description of Interior:

1. Floor Plans:

- a. First Floor: A central recessed porch leads into a small hall and a rectangular floor space divided unevenly into four office areas. The projecting front wings on either side of the central entry are separated from the main building block by a solid original brick wall. These wings are only accessible from the exterior and now serve as storage areas.

- 2. Flooring: The floors are covered by brown, 12"-square tile flooring.
- 3. Wall and Ceiling Finish: The walls are painted brick in an all-stretcher pattern and the ceilings are finished with plaster.
- 4. Doorways and Doors: There are horizontal, five-panel, raised-panel doors throughout, except for the exterior doors leading to the storage rooms, which have three panels.
- 5. Special Decorative Feature, Trim, Cabinetwork: All the interior woodwork is very simple--plain door and window surrounds.
- 6. Mechanical Equipment:
 - a. Heating: Heating is provided by a gas-fired stove in the front room; a projecting chimney stack in the rear room located off the rear entrance has a lower cast iron door opening and a covered chimney flue opening above for stove attachment.

- b. Lighting: There are suspended florescent lighting fixtures in all rooms.

D. Site:

- 1. General Setting and Orientation: On Road S-4, east of Liscum Road, this building is located with the Cavalry Post complex behind Barracks #143. The building is of similar scale and materials as the other Cavalry Post buildings.

PART III. SOURCES OF INFORMATION

A. Old Views:

Fort Sam Houston Museum, Building #123, San Antonio, Texas.

B. Bibliography:

Real Property Records, Directorate of Facilities Engineering, Fort Sam Houston, San Antonio, Texas.

C. Likely Sources Not Yet Investigated:

Correspondence and other miscellaneous files relating to Fort Sam Houston, San Antonio, Texas. National Archives and Records Service, Washington, D.C.

PART IV. PROJECT INFORMATION

The detailed survey of eighteen (18) architecturally representative structures, and a group of streetscapes, at Fort Sam Houston, San Antonio, Texas, was undertaken in 1980 by the National Architectural and Engineering Record (NAER) after a comprehensive inventory of the Post was conducted. Funding for the project was made possible through the cooperative efforts of the Department of the Army, Fort Sam Houston, and the San Antonio Conservation Society.

This project was under the general supervision of Kenneth Anderson, Acting Chief of the Historic American Buildings Survey of the National Architectural and Engineering Record. Sally Tompkins of the NAER staff was project supervisor. Project Historian was Kathryn A. Burns, San Antonio, Texas. Photographic records were provided by David Kaminsky, Roswell, New Mexico.